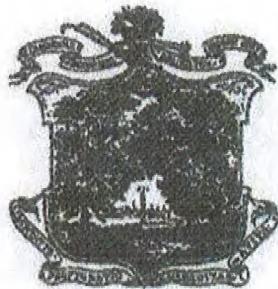


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ARLINGTON, MA 02174

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ARLINGTON REDEVELOPMENT BOARD

Arlington, Massachusetts  
Middlesex, ss

DOCKET NO. 3640

DECISION  
Special Permit Under  
ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN REVIEW

Applicant: Frank Balurdi, Smooth Automotive  
Property Address: 86 River Street, Arlington, Massachusetts 02474

Hearing Dates: January 4, 2021  
Date of Decision: January 4, 2021

20 Day Appeal Period Ends: February 9, 2021

Members  
Approved

Opposed

Rachel J. Zumberg  
John  
Adam L. Cirel  
David M. Ward  
Eugene B. Bragin

Town Clerk's Certification

Date

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**Town of Arlington, Massachusetts**

Redevelopment Board

730 Massachusetts Avenue, Arlington, Massachusetts 02476

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### **DECISION OF THE BOARD**

**Environmental Design Review Docket #3640**

**86 River Street, Arlington, MA 02474**

**Frank Balurdi, Smooth Automotive**

**January 4, 2021**

This Decision applies to the Special Permit application by Frank Balurdi to install signage that exceeds the allowed signage in the R2 Two-Family District at 86 River Street. The Special Permit is to allow the Board to review and approve the proposed signage, under Section 3.4, Environmental Design Review, and Section 6.2, Signs. A public hearing was held on January 4, 2021.

#### **Materials submitted for consideration of this application:**

- Application for EDR Special Permit,
- Impact statement;
- Dimensional information of the proposed signage, and
- Renderings of signage.

The following criteria have been met, per Section 3.3.3, Arlington Zoning Bylaw:

1. This automotive use has been established at this site for many years, and is a pre-existing, non-conforming use for the R2 Two-Family District. The signage is the subject of the special permit as required by Section 6.2.2.(C).
2. Automotive-related businesses have operated in this location for many years, and this business provides a service for the community. The recent redevelopment of the site is an improvement over the previous condition.
3. Only the signage is approved by this special permit. The improvements to the site completed by the owner do not create undue traffic congestion or impair pedestrian safety.
4. The automotive use does not overload any municipal systems.
5. No special regulations are applicable to the proposal.

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6. The use does not impair the integrity or character of the neighborhood.

7. The use is not in excess or detrimental to the character of the neighborhood.

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The following criteria have been met, per Section 3.4.4, Arlington Zoning Bylaw:

**A. EDR-1 Preservation of Landscape**

There are no changes to the landscape as there are no proposed exterior alterations other than new signage. The previous redevelopment of the property improved the site's condition.

**B. EDR-2 Relation of the Building to the Environment**

There are no changes to the exterior of the building other than the new signage. The previous redevelopment of the property improved the site's condition.

**C. EDR-3 Open Space**

Open space was created as part of the previous redevelopment of the property. There are no changes to open space as a result of the sign installation.

**D. EDR-4 Circulation**

The previous redevelopment of the site improved the circulation. The addition of signage does not change any circulation patterns.

**E. EDR-5 Surface Water Drainage**

The installation of signage will not change the surface water run-off at the site.

**F. EDR-6 Utilities Service**

There are no changes to the utility service due to the installation of the signage.

**G. EDR-7 Advertising Features**

Being located in an R2 Two-Family District, this business is at a disadvantage relative to the signage allowed. This special permit has been granted in order to allow signage that exceeds what is allowed in this location, the Residential Sign District as defined by Section 6.2. Per section 6.2.2(C), the ARB found that the additional signage, a greater number of signs, and signage in a location that is otherwise not allowed should be allowed in the public interest.

The building is oriented toward the intersection of River Street and the Mystic Valley Parkway, a major intersection and facing away from the residential properties on River Street. The site has been the location of automotive businesses in the past and the redevelopment of the site has improved the condition of the property. In order to adequately find the business, the larger signs are in the public's interest. A wall sign and a canopy sign will be installed consistent with the requirements for signs in the Business Sign District, which encompasses the B2A, B3, B4, and B5 districts.

The wall sign will be mounted on the façade of the building facing Mystic Valley Parkway. The sign is approximately 36 square feet and is mounted to the building at a height less than 25 feet as the building is 22 feet tall. The letters of Smooth Automotive (without the tire marks) will be internally illuminated. The letters will appear black during the day, but when illuminated the letters will appear white. The sign will be bracketed to the wall.

The canopy sign will face River Street. The sign is approximately 19.4 square feet and each letter is mounted to the top of a structural awning above the customer entrance. Each letter is individually cut brushed aluminum letters. This sign is not illuminated.

**H. EDR-8 Special Features**

There are no such special features proposed as part of the sign installation.

**I. EDR-9 Safety**

There are no changes to safety that are proposed as part of the signage installation.

**J. EDR-10 Heritage**

The existing structure is not listed on a state or local inventory nor are they under the jurisdiction of the Arlington Historical Commission.

**K. EDR-11 Microclimate**

There are no changes that will impact the microclimate.

**L. EDR-12 Sustainable Building and Site Design**

The sign installation will not change the sustainable building and site design.

The Redevelopment Board made the following findings upon approval of the docket:

1. The nature of the use being made of the building is such that allowing an additional sign, signs of a larger size, and signs located in a location otherwise not allowed is in the public interest consistent with Section 6.2 of the Zoning Bylaw.
2. The ARB finds that the project is consistent with Environmental Design Review per Section 3.4 of the Zoning Bylaw.

The project must adhere to the following general conditions:

1. Any substantial or material deviation during construction from the approved plans and specifications is subject to the written approval of the Arlington Redevelopment Board.
2. The Board maintains continuing jurisdiction over this permit and may, after a duly advertised public hearing, attach other conditions or modify these conditions as it deems appropriate in order to protect the public interest and welfare.